

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the paragraph on Page 13, line 24 – Page 14, line 5, as follows:

Figure 1b further shows a first barrier layer 112 substantially comprised of the materials present in the deposition atmosphere 120, wherein the amount of the inert component 122, such as the argon, is typically significantly less than the amount of the target and/or additional component due to the sputter specific kinetics in the deposition atmosphere 120. A thickness of the first barrier layer 112 at the upper portion 110, indicated as 113, exceeds the thickness at the lower portion 111, indicated as 114, due to the parameter setting defining the first state of the deposition atmosphere 120.